

**THE PASSING OF THE THIRD
FLOOR BACK: AN IDLE
FANCY IN A PROLOGUE, A
PLAY, AND AN EPILOGUE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649763726

The Passing of the Third Floor Back: An Idle Fancy in a Prologue, a Play, and an Epilogue by
Jerome K. Jerome

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JEROME K. JEROME

**THE PASSING OF THE THIRD
FLOOR BACK: AN IDLE
FANCY IN A PROLOGUE, A
PLAY, AND AN EPILOGUE**

**THE PASSING OF THE THIRD
FLOOR BACK**

The Passing of the Third Floor Back

AN IDLE FANCY

In a Prologue, A Play, and An
Epilogue

By
JEROME K. JEROME

“ I will seek thy good ”



NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

1922

CHARACTERS IN THE PROLOGUE

A Satyr
A Coward
A Bully
A Shrew
A Hussy
A Rogue
A Cad
A Cat
A Snob
A Slut
A Cheat
and
A Passer-by

The Passing of the Third Floor Back

PROLOGUE

SCENE

The first floor front of 13, Bloomsbury Place, London, W. C. The furniture is of the Early Victorian or horsehair period. A worn Brussels carpet covers the floor. A large round table occupies the centre of the room. The high bay windows, looking out upon the street, are draped with red curtains; between them stands a small desk. Against the wall at back, an old-fashioned cottage piano, and a sideboard. From the wall to the right of the audience large folding doors lead into the dining-room. Two easy-chairs face the fire, which is supposed to be in front: a dull red glow spreads itself across the room. The door at back opens into the passage. Opposite to it is the front door, surmounted by a "fanlight"; and beyond, the ever-nmisty square, leafless in winter dreariness. A

The Passing of the 'Third Floor Back

heavy three-branched gaselier hangs from the ceiling, the globes hidden under paper shades.

It is a Friday afternoon in November.

[MRS. SHARPE *is making out her bills. She is a tall, thin, sharp-featured woman. She wears a widow's cap and spectacles; the latter she takes off when not writing. She looks up from her writing, looks at her watch, then calls.*]

MRS. SHARPE

Stasia! [*She rises and goes to the door.*] Lazy hussy. [*Calls louder*] Stasia!

STASIA

[*Without.*] All right—all right. Don't shout. Spoil yer voice for singing.

[*Enter as she speaks STASIA, carrying a tray laden with tea-things. She is a slatternly young person, her hair fluffed all about her head.*]

MRS. SHARPE

Don't answer me like that, you workhouse brat you. What have you been doing?

STASIA

Injuring myself. [*Puts down the tray on the table.*] All there is to do in this plice.

The Passing of the Third Floor Back

MRS. SHARPE

You take care you don't lose it—find yourself with the key of the street in your pocket. Not many places open to girls just out of prison.

STASIA

Industrial school, if you please.

MRS. SHARPE

[*Gives a snorting laugh.*] What time did old Wright come in last night?

STASIA

[*She is laying the table.*] 'Bout 'alf past 'leven or quarter to twelve.

MRS. SHARPE

Drunk?

STASIA

Oh, just fuddled, sime as usual. You know, I suppose, that ye're out of whiskey?

MRS. SHARPE

I'd forgotten it.

STASIA

Lucky 'e wasn't in a noticing mood. I give 'im 'alf a tumblerful of cold tea and filled it up with soda water. 'E went to bed singing. [*Laughs.*]

The Passing of the Third Floor Back

MRS. SHARPE

[*Thinking aloud.*] Cold tea? Not a bad idea, that. Much the same colour.

STASIA

And less 'armful,

MRS. SHARPE

[*She grows confidential.*] He's the only one that ever asks for whiskey?

STASIA

Only one of 'em as I'd trust not to blackmail yer afterwards for selling it to them without a licence.

MRS. SHARPE

No need to let him have it when he's sober. You can have mislaid the key. Understand?

STASIA

I understand. And where do I come in?

MRS. SHARPE

You be a good girl, and maybe I'll find a blouse I've done with, when I've time to go over my drawer.

STASIA

Rather 'ave it 'fore you've done with it, if ye're sure yer can spare it. Don't want to be mistook, when I go out, for a bit of old London.